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INDEPENDENCE  
KANSAS

MARCH 2016

# CITY HALL NEWS

## The SHOWDOWN is on!

Once again, Independence is facing off against dozens of other cities in the annual Kansas Hometown Showdown photo contest sponsored by the League of Kansas Municipalities (League).

We came OH SO CLOSE in last year's contest with photographer Rob Morgan's image of fireworks over the Riverside Park Shelter House. We captured second place in a field of 59 competitors, edged out only by Haysville.

This year, the sky's the limit with this photo by local author and historian John Koschin, a powerful shot of biplanes flying over downtown Independence to kick off the veterans' parade on June 20, 2015. The photo was selected from a group of several fabulous local submissions and is now in the running against photos from 63 other Kansas communities.

**This is where you come in...** Winning



photos in the competition are selected by visitors to the League's Facebook page who "like" their favorite photo. You can vote by visiting the page at [facebook.com/LeagueofKansasMunicipalities](https://www.facebook.com/LeagueofKansasMunicipalities).

A new round begins each week, and the photos with the most likes will advance in the competition until the

winner is announced April 4. The selected entry will be published on the cover of a future issue of *Kansas Government Journal*, and the winning community will have, of course, bragging rights!

Please take a few minutes to log on weekly, cast your vote, and ask your family and friends to do the same.

## Calendar Notes...

### March 4 First Friday

7:30 a.m. - Independence Civic Center  
Monthly community update co-hosted by the City and Independence Chamber of Commerce.  
March Sponsor: Community National Bank & Trust

### March 5 Recycling Collection Day

8 a.m.-12 noon - City Sanitation Yard, 21st & Maple  
Offered monthly on the first Saturday.  
Find the list of accepted recyclables on Page 2.



# Indy residents embrace recycling initiative



The turnout on the first collection day for the community's recycling effort was powerful affirmation that Independence residents are onboard with the concept. City Sanitation Department workers and volunteers accepted approximately 125 vehicle loads of recyclables during the four-hour collection Saturday, February 6.

Recycling collection is now offered on the first Saturday of each month, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon, at the city's Sanitation Yard, located at 21st and Maple.

Public Works Director Mike Passauer explained that Independence has partnered with the City of Fredonia's existing recycling program. Once recyclables are collected locally, they are trucked to Fredonia for further sorting, then transported to regional recycling facilities.

"Residents have been asking for a recycling program in Independence for several years, and we're thankful to have the opportunity to partner with the community of Fredonia to now offer collection services," said Passauer.

Passauer explained that every ton of trash hauled to the area land-fill costs the city (and its customers) \$35. He expects the recycling effort to eventually add up to real savings for the community, while also serving a "greener" purpose by keeping waste out of the landfill.

"Judging from the response of our residents so far, we expect our local recycling effort to make a significant impact on costs and tonnage of waste removal, and, of course, make us better global citizens in terms of protecting our environment."



## YES - Accepted Recyclables

- Aluminum cans (flat preferred)
- Appliances
- Books/Phone Books
- Car/Lawn Mower Batteries
- Cardboard
- Cell Phones
- E-Waste
- Glass Bottles (lids removed)
- Household batteries
- Junk Mail
- Magazines/Catalogs
- Newspapers
- Office Paper/Office Waste
- Cereal/Cracker Boxes
- Steel Cans (rinsed, lids off)

## NO - Not Accepted

- Aerosol Cans
- Aluminum Cat Food Cans
- Bubble Wrap
- Building Materials
- Ceramic
- Hazardous Materials
- Light Bulbs
- Mirrors
- Packing Peanuts
- Paint Cans
- Paper Plates/Paper Towels
- Styrofoam
- Tin Foil/Pie Plates
- Tires
- Waxed Cardboard
- Windshields
- Wrapping Paper

## Calendar Notes...

**March 17 & 24**

**City Commission Meetings**

5:30 p.m. - Veterans Room/Memorial Hall  
Open to the community.

**March 22**

**'Storm Fury on the Plains'**

6:30 p.m. - Judicial Center Basement  
Severe weather training and education for everyone.  
Offered by Montgomery County Emergency Management and the National Weather Service office in Wichita.



# Tackling annual projects the S.M.A.R.T. way

As a resident of Independence, you may or may not have a full understanding of what it takes to keep your city running day to day...From smoothly-paved streets, clean drinking water and flushing toilets to personal health and safety and quality facilities for leisure activity, the scope of the City's responsibility is very broad.

To ensure optimal stewardship of limited financial and human resources for the best return and value to citizens, City leaders

annually review accomplishments in each department and prioritize goals for the coming year. Goal-setting is made more effective by incorporating the SMART system, ensuring each objective is **Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Results-focused** and **Time-bound**.

Below are some highlights of your City's 2016 goals to help maintain and improve our community's infrastructure:

## ADMINISTRATION

- Update strategic plan and capital improvement plan for water, sewer, streets, side-walks, ADA ramps, park/zoo improvements
- Hire new Police Chief by March 31
- Launch new website and enhance community relations

## AIRPORT

- Complete interior "resweep" (cleanout) of fuel tanks
- Provide additional staff training to enable coverage for employee absences

## CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

- Automate banking systems for electronic deposits of customer checks
- Conduct audit to ensure all city licenses are updated and in good standing
- Declutter office and establish individual co-worker goals

## FIRE/EMS

- Achieve 100% trained and certified EMT's; continue paramedic training
- Increase Firefighter II training to 91% (currently 84%) Continue to improve EMS average response time
- Create new storage solution for VFW flags

## MEMORIAL HALL

- Improve audio-visual capabilities for video recording in Veterans Room
- Purchase replacement commercial refrigerator for Civic Center kitchen
- Refinish Civic Center floor (completed)

## PARK/ZOO/CEMETERY

- Complete Logan Fountain restoration project and unveiling ceremony
- Increase park building usage (rentals) by 20% through continued building improvements and enhanced promotion

## POLICE

- Purchase additional rifles to properly equip all units for active shooter response
- Acquire mobile software to assist forensic investigations
- Fill all vacant patrol positions with qualified personnel by March 31

## PUBLIC SAFETY

- Ensure excellent emergency health care response by improving protocol, purchasing needed equipment and providing skills training
- Lead Safety Committee in assessing personal protective equipment (PPE) needs for employees in all jobs

## SANITATION

- Continue/support community recycling initiative
- Develop policy for utilization of new poly-cart trash bins
- Modify employee work schedules to conform with other departments and allow for more daylight working hours to enhance safety

## STREET

- Upgrade strobes/lighting on all vehicles to improve safety
- Map out locations of manholes/other hazards to prevent equipment damage
- Strive for all employees to obtain Commercial Driver's Licenses to maximize capabilities across departments

## UTILITIES

- Install new motor control center at water plant
- Purchase new meter reading handheld equipment/software to improve precision
- Train all employees in safe backhoe and sewer vac truck operations

## WATER/SEWER

- Focus on prompt cleanup of dirt, concrete, asphalt, etc., after water line repair work.
- Provide cross training of employees for interchangeable duties within department
- Enhance focus on timely, accurate meter reading

## Calendar Notes...

**March 26**

***Women's Self-Defense Training***

9 a.m.-12 noon - Christian Karate Academy  
Offered by Independence Police Department.  
Call **620-332-1700** for more information and to register.

**March 26**

***Community Easter Egg Hunt***

3 p.m. - Riverside Park  
Sponsored by the Rotary Club  
for children ages 0-9.





# Let's all try a little **KINDNESS** April 30

Simple gestures - a smile, opening the door for someone, a personal note of thanks - come at minimal cost to the giver but can be priceless to the recipient.

Civic leaders believe the concept of *individual* random acts of kindness can go a long way to boost the mood and attitude of our *collective* community. So, a full day this spring has been set aside to encourage residents to be intentional about doing something nice for a neighbor.

**"LOVE Independence"** day will officially be celebrated **Saturday, April 30**, and is an opportunity for all residents, young or old, to get involved and show some love for each other and our wonderful community.

The LOVE Independence initiative is championed by the Independence Chamber of Commerce and patterned after



similar events in other communities across the country.

"The possibilities are endless," said Lisa Wilson, Chamber President. "Acts of kindness don't have to be expensive, elaborate or time consuming to make a significant impact. The objective is to simply brighten someone else's day and, in turn, experience the personal joy that accompanies that. We believe this activity can have a ripple effect

that can elevate the morale of the entire community."

Wilson said everyone in the city is encouraged to participate as individuals or together with their churches, businesses, clubs, neighborhoods or families to help spread the love. And, to help jump-start your thinking about kindness ideas, a handy list of suggestions is provided at [indkschamber.org](http://indkschamber.org).

## Health Assessment results expected soon

City officials hope to wrap up a local health care assessment project and present results to the community by late April. The project began in February with a public forum to discuss the current and future state of health care in the community, with additional focus

***'This is an initiative intended to help us move forward as a community...'***

group sessions planned with cross-sectional groups of community residents. Input gathered from these sessions - including residents' needs and concerns in light of recent

changes in local health care services - will be used to inform a final report back to the community and help build the foundation for future planning.

The health care assessment project is facilitated by professionals with the Community Engagement Institute at

Wichita State University (WSU) and is funded by the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund and the Kansas Health Foundation. These groups were enlisted by local civic leaders to assist in this research after the closure of Mercy Hospital.

The mission of WSU's Community Engagement Institute is to improve the health of Kansans through a variety of community-based research and development initiatives.

"This is an initiative intended to help us move forward as a community to fully understand the health care needs and concerns of our citizens," said Independence City Manager Micky Webb.

"This is a first step in re-establishing a sustainable health care system in Independence, using input from many perspectives to create a clear current picture and future roadmap."

## Calendar Notes...

**April 1**

***First Friday***

7:30 a.m. - Independence Civic Center  
Monthly community update co-hosted by the City and Independence Chamber of Commerce.

*April Sponsor: Independence Family Medicine*

**April 2**

***Recycling Collection Day***

8 a.m.-12 noon - City Sanitation Yard, 21st & Maple  
Offered monthly on the first Saturday.  
Find the list of accepted recyclables on Page 2.



## Logan Fountain nearing the end of its dry spell

After four dormant summers, a nostalgic Riverside Park attraction will soon be awing visitors once again.

Park & Zoo Director Barb Beurskens explained the multi-year, approximately \$160,000 restoration of Logan Fountain will culminate in a grand unveiling ceremony **April 8**. The new and improved fountain will boast all new plumbing, walls, floor, decorative tile and new water jets. Beurskens said the project has been assisted by several individual and corporate donations and in-kind labor provided by area contractors.



**PATIENTLY WAITING** - The restored Logan Fountain will be officially restarted in a special evening ceremony April 8. Project donors Independence City Commissioner Gary Hogsett and wife, Dr. Anne Hogsett, purchased the privilege of "pushing the button" to start the fountain.

## Coming soon...

### *City to provide new poly-cart trash bins*

In an effort to ensure the safety of our sanitation workers, the City will be providing all residential sanitation customers a poly-cart trash receptacle for routine use. The bins will be similar in design to the one pictured at right, with a 95-gallon capacity and made of heavy duty construction.

The goal of having uniform bins at all residences is to ensure a more standard volume and weight of trash at each pick-up location, as well as an appropriate receptacle to manage. This will help prevent injuries to our workers from juggling irregular-sized, overweight and loose trash items. As is our current policy, all trash placed in the new bins should be bagged and secured.

Stay tuned for more information on the selection of trash bins and phased delivery to customers later this summer.



## Calendar Notes...

**April 9**

***Opening Day at the Park***

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. - Riverside Park

Rides, games, face painting, concessions, petting zoo, inflatables and lots of activities for children of all ages.

**April 14 & 28**

***City Commission Meetings***

5:30 p.m. - Veterans Room/Memorial Hall

Open to the community.



2015

# QUICK FACTS



## FIRE/EMS

- Responded to **2,502** medical calls with an average response time of **3.91 minutes**.
- Received its third consecutive **perfect score** from the Kansas Board of EMS, putting the department in the top 5-10% of services across the state.

## WATER PLANT

- Treated **679,678,000** gallons of water
- Pumped **473,837,160** gallons to city customers, generating approximately \$1.5 million in revenue

## SEWER TREATMENT

- Processed **97 tons** of bio-solids for distribution as fertilizer for area cropland.
- Cleaned **80,027 feet** of sewer main line



## AWOL

- Processed **810** animals (498 dogs/312 cats).
- Of these, **69 percent** were adopted or reclaimed and a total of **372** were spayed or neutered.

## Calendar Notes...

**April 30**

***LOVE Independence Day***

A day to express friendship to our neighbors through random acts of kindness.

**May 6**

***First Friday***

7:30 a.m. - Independence Civic Center  
Monthly community update co-hosted by the City and Independence Chamber of Commerce.

*May Sponsor: USD 446, Greenbush, Tri-County Interlocal*

# 2015 QUICK FACTS

## HOUSING AUTHORITY

- Provided **\$250,000** in homeowner rehabilitation grants.
- Provided **\$100,000** in incentives for upper story apartment development in downtown buildings.
- Provided **\$50,000** to the City for removal of unsafe structures.
- Was awarded a **\$90,000** grant for tenant rental assistance.



## POLICE

- Received **14,156** calls through dispatch.
- Took **2,653** incident and crime reports.
- Made **690** felony and misdemeanor arrests.
- Committed **1,250** hours of time to local schools by the School Resource Officer.
- Celebrated Chief Harry Smith upon retirement after **31 years** of service



## SANITATION

- Picked up an estimated **6,384 tons** of garbage and **35** appliances.
- Delivered **55** eight-yard residential dumpsters.
- The average sanitation pick-up worker handles **10,000 pounds** of trash per day.

## Calendar Notes...

**May 7**

### ***Recycling Collection Day***

8 a.m.-12 noon - City Sanitation Yard, 21st & Maple  
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**May 12 & 26**

### ***City Commission Meetings***

5:30 p.m. - Veterans Room/Memorial Hall  
Open to the community.





**City of Independence**  
**120 N. 6th**  
**Independence, KS 67301**

**EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**PATROLMAN I** - Full-time.  
\$15.10/hour starting; benefits.

**RIDE OPERATORS/TICKET  
SELLERS** - Part-time. Must be 18  
years old. \$9/hour.

**FF1/MICT** - \$753.76 per 56-hour  
work week; benefits.

Applications are accepted at:  
Kansas Works

317 N. Penn, Independence  
620-332-5904

[www.southeastkansasworks.com](http://www.southeastkansasworks.com)  
[www.kansasworks.com](http://www.kansasworks.com)

**SEASONAL WORKERS**

Contact: Express Employment,  
2009 N. Penn, Independence  
620-331-6200

*City Hall*  
**100 YEARS**

